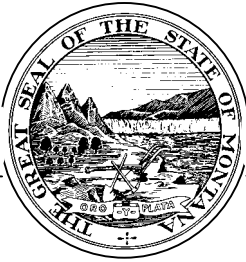


DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION
DIVISION OF BANKING AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS



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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 29, 2005

PHONY CREDIT UNION "PHISHING" SCAM

HELENA, MONTANA – The Montana Division of Banking and Financial Institutions today issued a consumer alert to the Montana press corps and consumers warning them about an entity identifying itself as First Credit Union.

The Division of Banking and Financial Institutions has received information that an entity or person representing itself as First Credit Union is targeting consumers in an email "phishing" scam. "Phishing" scams are a form of identity theft, which are designed by Internet thieves to collect confidential financial information, such as account numbers and passwords. It is common for these fraudulent emails to look authentic and even include the use of an institution's logo and marketing slogans.

The emails related to the entity identifying itself as First Credit Union requested consumers to protect their First Credit Union Internet Banking account from unauthorized access. It states that the consumer's online banking has been limited for security purposes because of failed attempts to access their account. Consumers are directed to a link outside of the email to submit personal account information in order to restore their online banking.

"This is apparently an attempt by a person or entity to obtain personal information through identity theft to otherwise illegally part Montanans from their money," said Annie M. Goodwin, Commissioner of the Montana Division of Banking and Financial Institutions.

A legitimate Arizona state-chartered credit union named First Credit Union is located in Chandler, Arizona and has no connection with this fraudulent Internet phishing scam. First Credit Union in Chandler, Arizona is aware of the scam and has posted an alert posted on its website at www.firstcu.coop.

The Division of Banking and Financial Institutions is not aware of any Montana consumers who may have been defrauded. Anyone who has responded to an email solicitation from First Credit Union should notify the Montana Division of Banking and Financial Institutions by calling (406) 841-2920. Consumers who have responded to email solicitations from First Credit Union are also encouraged to contact the National Credit Union Association's Fraud Hotline at (800) 827-9650.

Anyone who questions the authenticity of an entity or person who represents itself as a depository institution in Montana should contact the Division of Banking and Financial Institutions at (406) 841-2920. A consumer who suspects that they may be a victim of a "phishing" or identity theft scam, should call their local law enforcement agency to report the crime and contact the Federal Trade Commission at (877) 438-4338 or online at www.consumer.gov/idtheft for information on how to protect their credit report. Victims of identity theft should place a watch on their credit report and check it every six months to make sure no new unauthorized activity has been placed in their name. For more information about "phishing" scams visit <http://www.occ.gov/consumer/phishing.htm>.

The Division of Banking and Financial Institutions is the regulator for all Montana state-chartered banks and credit unions. There are currently fifty-four banks and twelve credit unions chartered by the Division. The aggregate assets of the banks and credit unions supervised by the Division are over \$14.5 billion.

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